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SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: WORLD FOOD PROGRAM EXECUTIVE BOARD 2009 SECOND REGULAR  
SESSION: COLLABORATING TOWARD A FOOD SECURE FUTURE

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Summary  
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¶1. The 2009 Second Regular Session of the World Food Program (WFP) Executive Board was held in Rome from November 9-12. Improved collaboration among the Rome-based UN food and agriculture agencies as well as other partners was a prominent theme. UNDP Administrator Helen Clark was invited as a special guest to speak on synergies with WFP in the field. The Board approved the 2010-2011 Biennial Management Plan with a projected operational budget of \$8.37 billion. It also considered policy documents on school feeding, gender and capacity building. Two Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO) projects for Haiti and Burma totaling \$269.4 million were approved, and six project evaluations were reviewed. End summary.

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Opening Session: Commemorating Humanitarian Heroes  
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¶2. WFP held a commemorative tribute to the five WFP staff members killed and the four injured during the October 5 bombing of the WFP office in Islamabad. Board members viewed a touching video and offered resounding messages of sympathy and support, underscoring the importance of safety and security.

¶3. In her opening remarks, Executive Director Josette Sheeran highlighted the increasing collaboration among the Rome-based UN and other partner agencies, citing the historic November 4 meeting of the Rome heads of agencies and 40 senior staff as well as examples such as the Purchase for Progress (P4P) Initiative in conjunction with IFAD, providing logistics support for partners, and seed distribution in Zimbabwe with FAO and AGRA. She also spoke on WFP's continued improvements in being the UN trendsetter for transparency and accountability. As examples, she cited the formation of the internal Strategic Resource Allocation Committee (SRAC) and progress in the

financial framework review to attain clarity in and implementation of WFP program categories, particularly PRROs which continue to cause anxiety among humanitarian donors due to blurred programming lines between emergency food aid and development. She closed by using the 20th anniversary of the collapse of the Berlin Wall as a symbol of global inspiration to break down food insecurity barriers in 2010.

¶4. In her first address to the Executive Board, the Ambassador spoke of the great political and public will currently providing new opportunities to tackle food insecurity, highlighting the commitment of the Obama Administration to engage multilaterally in this effort. The Ambassador also stressed that the renewed focus on agriculture would not come at the expense of emergency food aid, and urged both the Rome Agencies and the representatives of their governing bodies to "rise to the occasion together to meet the many challenges of creating a food secure world." For full text: <http://usunrome.usmission.gov/main>.

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Special Guest: UN Development Program Administrator  
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¶5. Helen Clark, Administrator of UNDP (WFP's fourth largest partner with collaboration in 43 countries), spoke on programming synergies between the two agencies, including "Delivering as One" pilots, and early recovery efforts utilizing the Resident Coordinator function as the primary facilitator. She allied herself with Sheeran as a fellow female head of agency, noting shared emphasis on gender perspectives and the importance of equal opportunity and security for women in development. Top officials from both agencies have been designated to move the partnership forward and overcome administrative hurdles. She stressed the importance of pledges

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materializing to support the work ahead in attaining global food security. For full text: <http://content.undp.org/go/newsroom/2009/nove mber/helen-clark-statement-to-the-executive-board- of-the-world-f ood-programme-.en?categoryID=349463>.

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Policy Issues: School Feeding, Capacity Building and Gender  
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¶6. After 45 years of implementing school feeding programs, the Board considered WFP's first School Feeding Policy at this session. The policy, which aims to implement a unified approach to school feeding across all WFP programs, was jointly presented with World Bank school feeding expert Don Bundi as a multi-purpose safety net which can be used toward various outcomes (education, value transfer, nutrition, etc.) in emergency, transition, or stable situations. Eight quality standards and five phases of transition are defined based on WFP's research and analysis. In his intervention, USDA Deputy Undersecretary (DUS) Bud Philbrook welcomed the policy, asking for clarifications on transition, capacity, links to local production and other UN-based efforts, education reform and nutrition. The Board was generally supportive of the policy and requested a comprehensive evaluation, including early implementation of the new policy, by the First Regular Session in 2012.

¶7. Capacity Building Implementation: Following a 2008 evaluation during which implementation gaps were identified, WFP provided an overview on how it aims to address weaknesses in capacity building both within and external to WFP, including through targeted training of WFP staff and partners. The United States stressed the need for more actionable efforts where WFP can add the most value and reiterated that internal focus on the building of staff capacity should remain a priority. WFP was asked to share with the Board the comprehensive implementation plan currently being developed.

¶8. Gender Action Plan: Following the adoption of WFP's Gender Policy in February 2009, WFP updated the Board on its progress to formulate a 2010-2011 Gender Policy Corporate Action Plan (CAP). CAP priorities include, among others: increasing knowledge and capacity among staff to carry out gender analysis; incorporate a gender perspective into policies, programs and projects; and establishing an accountability framework to ensure adequate gender mainstreaming. In its statement the United States, which has been extensively engaging with WFP bilaterally to define specific areas of collaboration, expressed appreciation for the increased emphasis on targeting of men and boys in programs, and the inclusion of a gender tracking and reporting mechanism. The U.S. also highlighted the use of the terms "support" and "facilitate" with regard to protection-like activities in camps, noting that they indicate WFP intends to work with partners such as UNHCR under whose purview these activities fall rather than implement these activities directly.

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2010-2011 Biennial Management Plan  
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¶9. For the 2010-2011 Biennial Management Plan, the Board approved a projected operational program of work of \$8.37 billion, and approved a support and administrative budget of \$476 million as well as capital, security and capacity fund expenditures totaling \$69.3 million. The 2010-2011 Management Plan represents a decrease of \$2.83 billion from the current biennium's estimated \$11.78 billion, and covers identified needs of 83 million beneficiaries in 73 countries. More than half of the activities will be carried out in 10 countries: Sudan, Somalia, Iraq, DPRK, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, Afghanistan, Kenya, Chad and DRC. In his statement, USAID/Democracy, Conflict and

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Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA) Deputy Assistant Administrator (DAA) Jon Brause called for due attention to be placed on the safety and security of WFP staff and concurred with general donor sentiment on the need for increased efficiency and effectiveness of programming in increasingly challenging environments.

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Collaboration among the Rome-based Agencies  
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¶10. WFP presented a joint paper with FAO and IFAD entitled, "Directions for Collaboration among the Rome-based Agencies," which addressed a framework for collaboration in programs, administration and advocacy under the following topical areas: a) analytical and policy support for governments and national development plans; b) the food crisis and implementation of the UN's Comprehensive Framework for Action (CFA); c) climate change and links to natural resource management; d) the MDG Africa Initiative - MDG Africa Thematic Group on Agriculture and Food Security; and e) transition from relief to development. In her intervention, the Ambassador encouraged WFP to partner with FAO in building school gardens. The United States also endorsed statements by Switzerland and the United Kingdom requesting that all three heads of the Rome-based agencies be seated at the podium at the opening session of the World Summit on Food Security that took place on November 16. With regard to climate change, the Ambassador reiterated the U.S. position that WFP refrain from becoming too deeply involved in adaptation and mitigation work, including accessing international financing mechanisms, as this was the remit of other UN agencies.

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Evaluation Reports  
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¶11. A thematic evaluation on Contingency Planning and its place in the work of the organization was considered. Both Management and the Board agreed with the recommendations to re-conceptualize the role of contingency planning as an

integrated element, to re-affirm commitment to preparedness, and build on field experience to update guidance and develop skills.

The U.S. recognized the contingency planning work being undertaken by WFP's Pandemic Response Unit.

¶12. Evaluations of two Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations (PRROs) and three Country Programs (CPs) were reviewed. WFP management responses to evaluation recommendations and actions to be taken can be found under Agenda Item 6 at [http://one.wfp.org/~executiveboard/search/documents/index.asp?lang=1&page=1&ion=7&sub\\_section=2](http://one.wfp.org/~executiveboard/search/documents/index.asp?lang=1&page=1&ion=7&sub_section=2):

A) Malawi Country Portfolio: WFP operations were found to be aligned with government priorities and food assistance was efficiently and effectively delivered; an area of difficulty was in transition from emergency to recovery periods.

B) Republic of Congo PRRO 10312.1: The recovery component (90 percent of the project) did not fare well in results, due primarily to numerous pipeline breaks. Additionally, weak reporting complicated identification of results. Evaluation recommendations encouraged consolidation of Food for Work activities, improved coordination mechanisms, and resolution of logistical obstacles.

C) Cote d'Ivoire PRRO 10672.0: The U.S. recommended fine-tuning of geographical targeting for nutrition programs as well as the provision of additional training for nutrition partners.

D) Democratic Republic of Congo PRRO 10608.0: The impact on the nutritional status of children under five was found to be positive, while concerns centered on sustainability and

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monitoring.

E) Bangladesh CP 10410.0: The program was determined to be closely aligned with the national strategy, with positive results achieved in the food for education and community nutrition components. The U.S. expressed concern on lack of hand-over and lack of funds for capacity building.

F) Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR) Country Portfolio: Although a gap was noted in the addressing of chronic undernutrition, overall the portfolio performed well. The U.S. encouraged strengthening of partnerships in the school feeding program to leverage the relevance of investments made.

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Highlights from Regional Presentations and Programs  
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¶13. Regional and Country Directors highlighted issues and presented updates which can be found at <http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/resources/wfp211672.pdf>:

A) Eastern and Southern Africa: 2009 has been a very difficult year in the Horn, with deterioration of food supplies and livestock. Beneficiary numbers have surged 14 percent since January, now at 20 million in the region. WFP is implementing innovative programs to combat hunger, including cash and voucher programs. On the path forward, WFP will be working with CAADP to ensure that WFP assistance is factored into country plans.

B) Sudan: WFP aims to feed 6.4 million people with 665,000 metric tons of food at a total cost of \$874 million in 2010, but growing instability in the South threatens to create a deeper humanitarian crisis. In Darfur, WFP is still filling the gap for 45 percent of the caseload of NGOs expelled earlier this year. USAID/Sudan Deputy Mission Director/incoming FFP Director Brooke Isham praised WFP's work in the region and encouraged donations from other governments.

C) West Africa: The UN is developing a contingency plan to

respond to the political crisis in Guinea Bissau, which could create up to 500,000 refugees/IDPs. In the Sahel, overall crop production is low, with Niger having the worst harvest since 1997 (a second assessment is being carried out; the Government of Niger intends to cover gaps with imports, and is threatening to expel anyone calling the situation a crisis).

D) Asia: After the recent attacks in Pakistan and Afghanistan, security remains a major issue; WFP announced a call for re-location for which significant funds will be needed. Despite concerns, programs will not be cut. Responses to widespread natural disasters in the Philippines, Indonesia, Lao PDR and Cambodia continue. In Sri Lanka, although almost 190,000 have left, 100,000 IDPs remain in sub-standard conditions in closed camps.

E) Near/Middle East, Eastern Europe and Central Asia: Challenges stemming from conflict, climate change and lingering impact of the 'triple F' (food, finance, fuel) crisis continue. In Yemen, conflict in the North is causing access issues. In Gaza, where 72 percent of the population is food insecure, WFP's integrated school feeding system is currently serving 92,000 children. The use of new approaches, such as cash vouchers and a mobile phone based pilot for Iraqi refugees in Syria, is growing in the region.

F) Latin America and the Caribbean: Poverty, augmented by the global financial crisis, decline in remittances and natural disasters (tropical storm Ida in Nicaragua, El Salvador) continue as the drivers of food insecurity and vulnerability. Haiti Secretary of State for Agriculture Michel Chancy spoke on needs in his country, which is home to one-third of Latin

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America's vulnerable.

¶14. Project Approvals: Two PRROs were approved for Haiti (150,000 metric tons for 1,900,000 beneficiaries costed at \$147.6 million) and Burma (157,600 metric tons for 2,000,000 beneficiaries costed at \$121.8 million). In addition, a draft Country Program for Guatemala was considered and the Uganda Country Program, approved by correspondence in October, was raised for discussion in order to respond to Board members concerns on, for example, exit strategy.

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Staff Movements  
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¶15. At the closing session, key staff movements were announced:

-- Staffan de Mistura (Sweden/Italy), who has been in his position since July 1, was officially welcomed as Deputy Executive Director for Communications and External Relations;

-- Ernesto Baca (Argentina) was announced as Director of the Information Technology and Facilities Management Division.

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USDEL Side Meetings  
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¶16. USDEL members included: for USUN-Rome, Ambassador Ertharin Cousin, DCM Michael Glover, USDA Agricultural Counselor Suzanne Heinen, USAID/Supervisory Program Specialist and Acting Director for WFP Affairs Harriet Spanos, USAID Humanitarian Program Specialist Michelle Snow, USAID Finance and Oversight Specialist Elizabeth Petrovski, USAID Office Administrator Anthony Colarossi, Public Affairs Officer Lillian deValcourt-Ayala, and Political Officer Chris Hegadorn; for USDA, DUS Bud Philbrook, Deputy Administrator Pat Sheikh and School Feeding Chief Dorothy Feustel; and for USAID, DCHA DAA Jon Brause, current and incoming Food for Peace (FFP) Director Jeff Borns and Brooke Isham, FFP Deputy Director Jonathan Dworken, Policy Chief Dale Skoric, and Policy Team Leader Rachel Grant; and. The USDEL held side meetings with senior WFP staff on select country



operations and cross-cutting initiatives, a few of which are highlighted below:

A) Resource Allocation, Advance Funding and Pre-positioning: Senior staff briefed the USDEL on the Strategic Resource Allocation Committee (SRAC), which is led by the CFO and has met six times since its formation in June 2009 to allocate resources in a more transparent process (of concern to many donors were the four percent of multilateral donations which were previously not being directed to priority emergencies). A separate meeting on Emergency Planning discussed how to optimize the timing of in-kind contributions.

B) Purchase for Progress (P4P): P4P Director Ken Davies reported that the initiative now comprises projects in 21 countries, funded largely by the Gates and Buffet Foundations. Last year, \$1.5 billion of commodities were purchased through the program, \$1.1 billion from developing countries. The program is based on three pillars: leveraging WFP demand to drive development of smallholder organizations, linking small-scale suppliers to partners; and learning and sharing of lessons. An annual review will be held early December in Rome.

C) Nutrition: FFP provided an overview of its contract with Tufts University's School of Nutrition to examine the nutritional needs of food aid beneficiaries and the commodities currently available to meet those needs in the context of total available food resources. In addition, FFP provided an overview of its multi-year funding for non-emergency food aid programs aimed at preventing malnutrition in children under two.

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D) Select country operations meetings were held on Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Niger, Pakistan, Philippines, Somalia, Sri Lanka, and Sudan. Notes from these meetings have been disseminated separately and can be obtained from Rachel Grant at ragrant@usaid.gov.

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COMMENT  
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¶17. USUN Rome thanks all field and Washington staff who contributed with comments and key input on project and evaluation documents, which provided depth to U.S. interventions. USUN Rome will continue to ensure WFP remains focused on delivering emergency food aid and will assist in leveraging WFP expertise on logistics, local/regional procurement, vulnerability assessment mapping, productive safety nets and strengthening countries capacities to reduce hunger, in furtherance of the Administration's global food security strategy.

¶18. Minimize considered.  
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